

Pawtuxet River Authority and Watershed Council

8 Hope Furnace Road, Hope, RI 02831

401 615-7039 - www.pawtuxet.org

Monthly Board Meeting

PRA Office, Hope – May 2, 2011

Board Members Present: Bob Nero, Ross Adrain (arrived 7:35), Jack Donovan, Scott Goodinson, Rita Holahan, Jack Lancellotta, Arthur Langlais (arrived 6:55), Ginny Leslie, Paul Lockett, Mike Maddalena, Brian Manning, Ed Soltys

Board Members Absent: Gary Trott

Call to Order

Ms. Holahan called the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m. A quorum was present. The agenda was approved, with an addition of an update on municipal payments suggested by Mr. Lancellotta; the motion to approve the agenda was made Ms. Leslie and seconded by Mr. Manning.

Approval of April, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Holahan requested that the section on the accountant update be changed. Ms. Leslie agreed to revise that section and e-mail the edited version to the board for review and approval at the June meeting.

Municipal Payments

Mr. Lancellotta reported that he had spoken to the West Warwick town manager and the council at a public meeting requesting funding for the PRA. The town manager said that the check would be released the first week of May. Jack presented a check from the town for \$5,000 for FY 2010-11. Ms. Holahan reported that Cranston has put \$5,540 in their FY 2011-12 for the PRA.

Report on Clean-up Schedule

Mr. Nero provided an update. On April 9, a FEMA clean-up was held at West Warwick Industrial Park in Natick; massive amounts of debris, including many tires, were removed but much remains to be done. There will be a follow-up effort on May 7. Mr. Lancellotta reported that a community service person has pulled out about 40 tires and several bags of other debris from the site.

On April 16 and 17, clean-ups were held at three sites. At Roger Williams Park, about 200 volunteers, many from Serve RI and the R.I. Bass Federation, attended. At the Norwood Conservation Area, volunteers from the Norwood neighborhood association and Serve RI helped. Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts, Mayor Scott Avedisian and Warwick City Council President Bruce Place attended also. At Father Tirocchi Field in Warwick, a massive undertaking filled two 30-cubic yard dumpsters and produced a huge pile of tires. Serve RI and Johnson & Wales volunteers came out and did a fantastic job at a site that the City of Warwick wanted to have cleaned

up.

Mr. Nero said that the NRCS bid packages for tree removal will be sent out soon. Volunteers will be needed at some of the sites.

There will be another clean-up the first weekend in June just downstream from Johnson's Pond in Coventry where there is a massive debris field left over from the floods of last year. Mr. Nero will be attending a meeting of the Johnson's Pond Civic Association later this month to recruit volunteers.

Fish Passage/Pawtuxet Falls

Ms. Holahan advised the board that the project team is finalizing the bid package that should go out within a week. The pre-bid meeting will be held on May 12 at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet. Bids will be due in early June. On May 10, the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) will vote on their permit and the Army Corps of Engineers will decide on their permit after the CRMC vote. Sources for short-term funding to cover payments to contractors look promising (The RI Department of Environmental Management takes several weeks to reimburse after documentation is submitted).

Annual Pawtuxet Paddle

This event will be held on the morning of Saturday, June 25. We will ask people to register in advance; the event will be free, but we will request donations from participants. We will ask for refreshment donations also and will have a cookout. We will also ask participants

to help with shuttling canoes/kayaks and cars.

Harris Dam

Mr. Nero reported that RIDEM has been corresponding with us regarding an assessment that was done on the Harris dam, which the PRA owns. It has been classified a significant hazard dam. They asked if we want to challenge that classification; our attorney has said we should. If DEM finds that it needs repairs, we would have to make them. Mr. Nero formed an ad hoc subcommittee consisting of Messrs. Adrain, Donovan, Goodinson and Manning to work on this issue. Mr. Langlais suggested we get in touch with DEM regarding paying for dam maintenance. He urged that the ad hoc committee not restrict its efforts to just the Harris dam and suggested that we could work with other organizations and businesses in the watershed that own dams. Mr. Adrain said that dams can provide important flood control.

Mr. Nero urged board members to educate themselves on the RI Dam Management Act which allows for the creation of dam management districts. A few towns have formed these districts.

Veterans' Square

We are still waiting for the DEM wetlands permit so we can do landscaping at the site. Mr. Nero said that Mr. Maddalena had gotten in touch with some vocational education teachers who said that they could repair the floor of the shed for between \$3,000 and \$4,000,

using woodworking students to assist. We had earlier received bids for between \$18-20,000 to do the work. Mr. Maddalena urged that we proceed. Concern was raised about the source for funding the project. On a motion by Mr. Adrain, seconded by Mr. Langlais, the board voted unanimously to proceed with the work. Ms. Holahan suggested we get a termite inspection, but Mr. Nero said we will be using pressure-treated lumber and that we could just get some spray and do the work ourselves.

Treasurer's Report

The monthly report was reviewed. Ms. Holahan said that the Requests for Proposals for a new accountant were late going out and that proposals were still coming in. The finance committee (Ms. Holahan and Ms. Leslie and Messrs. Lockett, Goodinson and Lancellotta) will meet before the next board meeting to review the proposals and make a recommendation to the board. Mr. Nero said that the 990 Form has been filed with the IRS.

Carl Mattson

Mr. Nero passed around a resignation letter from Mr. Mattson, who was recently elected to the Coventry town council and therefore cannot serve on the PRA board. Mr. Nero also showed the board a certificate expressing the PRA's appreciation for his services to the group. Mr. Mattson's letter included the sentiment "I wish you all the best in whatever stream life's journey takes you."

New Headquarters Dedication

It was agreed that we should have an event to dedicate our new headquarters. Town officials and state legislators should be invited. We can have a cookout and have canoes available for paddling.

Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Leslie, seconded by Mr. Lockett, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Leslie, Secretary